



## **Charter of FORAGRO**

### **Chapter 1. Preamble**

#### **Article 1. Establishment of the Forum**

The Forum of the Americas for Agricultural Research and Technological Development (FORAGRO) was established in 1997 by Resolution No. 327 of the Inter-American Board of Agriculture (IABA) as a hemispheric mechanism for the discussion and mobilization of agreements on topics of research and innovation that impact the agri-food sector of the Americas. In 2003, through its resolution No. 398, the IABA again confirmed its support for FORAGRO. In 2016, in response to the results of an external evaluation, its governance model was updated to move towards a more effective, sustainable and inclusive FORAGRO.

### **Chapter 2. Mission, Vision and Functions**

#### **Article 2. Mission**

To serve as a Forum to promote dialogue, actively discuss needs and opportunities, generate analysis and proposals and foster partnerships to strengthen science, technology and innovation systems for the sustainable development of agriculture in the Americas.

#### **Article 3. Vision**

To be recognized as the main Forum of the Americas for discussion and sharing ideas on the present and future of agricultural science, technology and innovation systems.

#### **Article 4. Functions of the Forum**

The basic functions of FORAGRO are:

- 4.1. Act as a catalyst and promoter of improvements, raise awareness, and exchange information with constituents and stakeholders in support of agricultural R+D+I and fair access to its benefits to respond to the needs of the agriculture, agrifood and agroindustry sector and of the rural territories in the Americas.
- 4.2. Generate relevant information and knowledge on priority R+D+I issues to support decision-making processes among policymakers and stakeholders of the production sector and of the agricultural R+D+I system.
- 4.3. Facilitate inclusive mechanisms to improve the representation of its stakeholder groups.
- 4.4. Represent FORAGRO stakeholders at the Global Forum for Agricultural Research (GFAR).



### **Chapter 3. Membership and Governance**

#### **Article 5. Members of FORAGRO**

The Forum is an open and inclusive organization and membership is voluntary.

The incorporation mechanism of the members is the Virtual Registry. Through this Registry, organizations representing the following stakeholder groups may apply for membership in FORAGRO: Institutions of the R & D & I system, such as public and private research institutes and academic institutions; R & D & I cooperation organizations such as cooperation programs, collaborative networks and discussion forums; organizations of agricultural producers and other private sector organizations; extension and rural advisory services; development organizations and facilitating agencies; political entities (intergovernmental organizations related to the agricultural sector); civil society organizations including representatives of stakeholders such as women, youth and indigenous peoples.

The Executive Secretariat shall verify the applications received and forward them to the Steering Committee, which shall issue recommendations to the Assembly for approval by no objection.

#### **Article 6. Assembly of Members**

##### **6.1. Composition of the Assembly**

The Assembly will be made up of all members of FORAGRO.

The Assembly will meet every year in virtual form and every two years face-to-face and will be chaired by the President of the Steering Committee.

The quorum for the Assembly is half plus one of the member groups present either face-to-face or virtually.

##### **6.2 Roles and responsibilities of the Assembly:**

- a) Elect the members of the Steering Committee.
- b) Ratify member's registrations and withdrawals on the basis of criteria defined by the Forum.
- c) Define strategic direction and approve the Strategic Plan, its modifications, and the Medium-Term Plans.
- d) Approve annual and midterm reports.
- e) Approve the Charter and its revisions.
- f) Propose themes for the Forum.



## **Article 7. The Steering Committee**

The Steering Committee is the guiding body of FORAGRO, in charge of driving its actions. It is the decision-making body for the Forum's operational matters. It is made up of seventeen representatives from stakeholder groups of FORAGRO, who will have voice and vote. The Executive Secretary will participate in the deliberations of the Steering Committee with right to voice but not vote.

### **7.1 Composition of the Steering Committee**

- a) Five representatives of regional cooperation mechanisms on R&D&I
- b) One representative academic institutions.
- c) Four representatives of agents of the productive systems with at least 3 representatives of farmers' organizations, including family farming.
- d) Two representatives of civil society organizations.
- e) One representative of the organizations of R&D&I promotion.
- f) One representative of extension systems and Rural Advisory Services.
- g) One representative of the discussion forums related to R&D&I.
- h) One representative of intergovernmental organizations (political bodies).
- i) One representative of the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA).

### **7.2 Election of the Steering Committee**

- a) Only member organizations of the FORAGRO Assembly can nominate or be nominated to be part of the Steering Committee.
- b) The members of the Assembly are eligible to the Steering Committee.
- c) Candidates to the Steering Committee are nominated within the group of stakeholders to which they belong and are elected by the members of that group.
- d) The nominations are formalized by means of a public call to the members of the groups of stakeholders and are validated by the Steering Committee.
- e) The members of the Steering Committee are ratified by the Assembly.
- f) The duration of their mandate is biennial, allowing re-election for a second two-year term.
- g) In the absence of nominations from a group of stakeholders, the Steering Committee will establish a subcommittee to identify and propose candidates.
- h) The mandate is institutional



### 7.3 Organization of the Steering Committee

The Steering Committee will have one President and one Vice President who shall also be President and Vice President of the Assembly.

The Steering Committee shall elect the President and the Vice President among its members. The representatives of those stakeholder groups with two or more seats in the Steering Committee are eligible for the positions of President and Vice President.

The Steering Committee will meet every year in person and may hold extraordinary meetings at the request of its members.

The quorum for the Steering Committee is half plus one of the member groups present either face-to-face or virtually.

### 7.4 Roles and responsibilities of the Steering Committee

- a) Lead the process of formulation of the Strategic Plan and the Medium Term Plan
- b) Approve internal and external documents of FORAGRO.
- c) Approve common agendas.
- d) Approve annual Action Plans and their budgets according to availability of funds.
- e) Present annual accountability reports to the Assembly.
- f) Approve the agenda of the annual meeting of the Assembly, and convene it.
- g) Issue recommendations on membership applications to the Assembly for its final approval by non-objection.
- h) Represent FORAGRO through its President or delegate in regional and global meetings relevant to the purposes and activities of the Forum.
- i) Provide direction and support the work of the Executive Secretariat and interact with it in order to promote the development of FORAGRO and its activities.
- j) The Executive Committee may delegate functions to the Executive Secretary in accordance with the statutes.
- k) Order other necessary deliberations not stated here.

### **Article 8. Executive Secretariat**

FORAGRO will have an Executive Secretariat responsible for the operational leadership of the Forum's actions and to advise and support the Steering Committee.

The Executive Secretariat will consist of a Secretary and support staff according to the needs and budget availability. IICA will commit the main contributions to the functioning of the Executive Secretariat.



### 8.1. Appointment of Secretary or Secretary

IICA will appoint the Secretary in agreement with the Steering Committee. The Secretary will respond to the Steering Committee through its President, and will also be accountable to IICA for the management of the human and financial resources of the Secretariat provided by that organization.

### 8.1 Roles and responsibilities of the Executive Secretariat

- a) Execute the operational aspects of the Steering Committee's and the Assembly's decisions.
- b) Provide technical and operational support to the development of strategies, medium term plans and work plans.
- c) Provide organizational and logistical support to scheduled activities and meetings; develop agendas, organize and implement the meetings of the governance bodies.
- d) Implement the Forum's communication plan and maintain its presence in the Web.
- e) Regularly report to the SC on Forum operations.
- f) Prepare annual technical and financial reports for approval by the Steering Committee and the Assembly.
- g) Coordinate budget execution and other administrative actions.
- h) The Secretary shall participate in the meetings of the Steering Committee with voice but not vote.

### **Article 9. Technical Advisory Group**

The Technical Advisory Group is constituted by the Executive Secretary of FORAGRO, the executive secretaries of the regional R+D+I collaboration mechanisms (PROCISUR, PROCITROPICOS, PROCINORTE, PROMECAFE, the Technical Group on Research, Technology and Innovation of the Central American Agriculture Council, the INNOVAGRO Network, and FONTAGRO, and the representative of CARDI. Other guests will be invited as needed, at the discretion of the core Technical Advisory Group

The Technical Advisory Group will serve as an antechamber for the collection and analysis of topics and demands and for the preparation of concept notes and proposals. The Technical Advisory Group will meet at least twice a year or when necessary, virtually or in person.

### **Chapter 4. Planning Processes**

### **Article 10. Strategic Plan**

With the leadership of the Steering Committee and the support of the Executive Secretariat, FORAGRO will formulate a Strategic Plan that will have a horizon of ten years and may be updated in response to the evolution of the regional and global context. The Strategic Plan and its recommendations will be submitted by the Steering Committee to the Assembly for its consideration and final approval.



### **Article 11. Medium-Term Plan and Annual Action Plans**

Based on the objectives defined in the Strategic Plan, FORAGRO will develop Medium-Term Plans with a three-year horizon in order to define, prioritize and launch its actions. The Medium Term Plan will inform the development of annual action plans outlining concrete activities and expected results. The process to develop the Medium Term Plan will be led by the Steering Committee and submitted to the Assembly for consideration and final approval. Annual Action Plans will be approved by the Steering Committee.

### **Chapter 5. Financing**

**Article 12.** The Forum will be financed by voluntary contributions from its members, external funds, and the contributions of IICA for the operation of the Executive Secretariat.

**Article 13.** IICA shall provide for the administration of the human and financial resources of the Executive Secretariat and may also administer the cash contributions of the members. Resources from external donors may be administered by IICA or by one or more member organizations of FORAGRO, depending on the type of initiative and the specific policies governing the program or programs.

### **Chapter 6. Languages**

**Article 14.** The deliberations of the Forum will be conducted in Spanish. Interpretation into English will be provided for Assembly and Steering Committee events. Formal communications and the Forum's official documents will be issued by the Executive Secretariat in Spanish and in English.

### **Chapter 7. Amendments**

#### **Article 15.**

Any amendment of this Charter shall be submitted to the Assembly for its consideration and approval. Any member of FORAGRO may propose an amendment.

Any proposed amendment must be processed through the Executive Secretariat.

The Executive Secretariat will evaluate the proposal, issue a recommendation, and submit both to the President of the Steering Committee, who will submit them to the Assembly for final consideration.

### **Chapter 8. Decision-making process**

**Article 16.** The deliberations and resolutions of FORAGRO will be guided by the search for consensus. If consensus cannot be reached, decisions will be made by vote; for both the Assembly and the Steering Committee, if a vote results in a tie, the final decision will be made by the President.